

March 7, 2014

Dear Senator Meyer, Representative Gentile, Senator Maynard, Representative Albis, Senator Chapin, Representative Shaban, and all of the esteemed members of the Environment Committee,

I am writing this letter in support of HB 5422, which mandates Heartworm disease education in all animal shelters and pet stores. It is an important subject that warrants this worthwhile effort.

As a veterinarian, I see first-hand the impacts that heartworm disease has on both dogs and cats. Many pet owners believe that their pet may not be at risk because they are an indoor cat or don't contact other animals when outside. They do not understand that mosquito bite is the mode of transmission. Even dogs on year-round preventatives have potential for infection so annual testing is recommended. Many rescue groups are bringing in dogs from the southern states or the Caribbean and many of them have heartworm disease. In addition, coyotes are a known reservoir for the disease as well.

For these reasons, I support this effort to promote education in the pet-owning community.

Sincerely,

Adam Parker, D.V.M.